

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An ink cartridge refilling station comprising:
a receptacle for receiving an ink cartridge;
a supply of ink; and
a refilling mechanism for automatically adding ink to said ink cartridge from said supply of ink.
2. The refilling station of claim 1, further comprising a user interface for controlling said adding of ink to said ink cartridge.
3. The refilling station of claim 2, wherein said user interface comprises a touch screen for displaying information and receiving user input.
4. The refilling station of claim 1, further comprising a label reading mechanism for reading an identification label on said ink cartridge.
5. The refilling station of claim 4, wherein said label reading mechanism comprises a bar code scanner for reading said label.
6. The refilling station of claim 4, wherein said label reading mechanism comprises a magnetic strip reader for reading said label.
7. The refilling station of claim 1, further comprising a cartridge diagnostic unit for evaluating said cartridge.
8. The refilling station of claim 7, wherein said refilling mechanism operates in response to an evaluation of said cartridge output by said cartridge diagnostic unit.
9. The refilling station of claim 2, further comprising a memory unit for storing information sent and received from said user interface.

10. The refilling station of claim 1, further comprising a receipt printer.
11. The refilling station of claim 7, further comprising a diagnostic printer for printing information from said diagnostic unit.
12. The refilling station of claim 1, wherein said supply of ink further comprises a plurality of ink reservoirs each for containing a different ink.
13. The refilling station of claim 12, further comprising different colors of ink in said plurality of ink reservoirs.
14. The refilling station of claim 12, further comprising different qualities of ink in said plurality of ink reservoirs.
15. An ink cartridge comprising:
 - a reservoir for holding a supply of ink; and
 - an input port communicating with said reservoir, said port being configured to receive ink from an automated ink refilling station.
16. The cartridge of claim 15, further comprising an identification label, wherein said identification label provides information about said cartridge to said refilling station.
17. A method of adding ink to an ink cartridge, said method comprising:
 - placing said ink cartridge in a ink cartridge refilling station; and
 - adding ink to said ink cartridge with an automated refilling mechanism of said ink cartridge refilling station.
18. The method of claim 17, further comprising controlling said adding of ink to said ink cartridge with a user interface of said ink cartridge refilling station.

19. The method of claim 17, further comprising reading an identification label on said ink cartridge.
20. The method of claim 19, further comprising associating said identification label with a user profile.
21. The method of claim 19, further comprising using said identification label to identify an ink type for said cartridge.
22. The method of claim 17, further comprising evaluating said ink cartridge with an ink cartridge diagnostic unit of said ink cartridge refilling station.
23. The method of claim 22, further comprising adding ink of a specific quantity and type to said ink cartridge in accordance with output from said ink cartridge diagnostic unit, an identification label on said ink cartridge, and input from a user interface.
24. The method of claim 17, further comprising receiving a payment for ink placed in said ink cartridge by said ink cartridge refilling station.
25. The method of claim 24, further comprising printing a receipt.
26. The method of claim 24, further comprising receiving said payment using a pre-established user account.
27. The method of claim 20, further comprising storing said user profile, an ink cartridge diagnostic, and payment information on a memory unit.
28. The method of claim 23, further comprising printing said output from said ink cartridge diagnostic unit on a printer.

29. The method of claim 17, further comprising adding ink from different reservoirs in said ink cartridge refilling station to different reservoirs within said ink cartridge.
30. The method of claim 17, further comprising generating a user profile and storing said profile on a network accessible to a plurality of ink cartridge refilling stations.
31. A system of adding ink to an ink cartridge, said system comprising:
means for receiving said ink cartridge in an ink cartridge refilling station; and
means for adding ink to said ink cartridge.
32. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for controlling said adding of ink to said ink cartridge.
33. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for reading an identification label on said ink cartridge.
34. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for associating said identification label with a user profile.
35. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for using said identification label to identify an ink type for said ink cartridge.
36. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for evaluating the condition of said ink cartridge to provide an ink cartridge evaluation.
37. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for adding ink of a specific quantity and type to said ink cartridge in accordance with an evaluation of said ink cartridge, an identification label on said cartridge, and input from a user.
38. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for receiving a payment for ink placed in said ink cartridge by said ink cartridge refilling station.

39. The system of claim 38, further comprising means for printing a receipt.
40. The system of claim 38, further comprising means for receiving said payment using a pre-established user account.
41. The system of claim 30, further comprising means for storing a user profile, an ink cartridge evaluation, and payment information.
42. The system of claim 36, further comprising means for producing a hard copy of said ink cartridge evaluation.
43. The system of claim 31, further comprising means for adding ink from a plurality of ink reservoirs in said refilling station to a respective plurality of reservoirs within said ink cartridge
44. A method of adding ink to an ink cartridge, said method comprising:
placing said ink cartridge in a ink cartridge refilling station;
ascertaining information about said ink cartridge; and
if said information about said ink cartridge matches predetermined parameters,
refusing to add ink to said cartridge with an automated refilling mechanism of said ink cartridge refilling station.
45. The method of claim 44, wherein said predetermined parameters include incompatibility, cartridge damage, cartridge warranty and cartridge life.
46. The method of claim 44, further comprising recommending a different ink for use in said cartridge.